

# BMW Championship

Thursday, August 17, 2023

Olympia Fields, Illinois, USA

Olympia Fields Country Club

## Sahith Theegala

### Quick Quotes

#### Q. How would you characterize the round today?

SAHITH THEEGALA: Man, I hit it really, really well. Probably one of my best ball-striking rounds on TOUR. I don't think I made a putt outside of -- I don't know what the stats are, but my longest putt I made was on 2. Might have been six, seven feet. Had a bunch of really good looks that I hit good putts and just didn't go in. But that's golf.

Everything clicks, and I striped it today, and just had so many good looks, which I feel like is hard to do out here, so that was a great feeling.

#### Q. Is there something that you've been working on that kind of clicked today?

SAHITH THEEGALA: Yeah, interestingly enough, I made a ton of cuts in a row and then I missed three in a row, but those three cuts I missed in a row were the best I've driven it all year. I've really driven it pretty poorly until then, and I've continued that the last couple weeks. I've driven it really well, and the rest of my game kind of came back and started to click again.

I'm just going to stay patient and keep that driver in play.

#### Q. There's a lot of math and projections and all that going on, and I think you're 31st. How hard is it to ignore all that stuff, or do you actually pay attention to it?

SAHITH THEEGALA: Yeah, I think it's impossible to ignore. I think everyone would be lying if they didn't know exactly where they stood and -- not exactly but somewhat of an idea what it's going to take to get to next week.

It's another thing where I'm just going to try and put my best foot forward and have as good a week as I can and have the best prep. If I'm in position back nine on Sunday, that's when I'm really, really looking. Maybe earlier. Maybe this situation probably sometime on Sunday at the start of the round, too.



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But it's nice to draw off of the experience that I had last year because I knew exactly what I had to do last year, last round, and I did that.

It's impossible to ignore, but at least the first two, three rounds it's just another golf tournament. It's 50 guys, so it already feels like you're reaping the rewards of a good season a little bit already.

I'm definitely paying attention to it but not sweating it too much.

#### Q. With the cutoffs being different this year, going from 125, starting at 70 now, down to 50, down to 30, and with those eight Signature Events that you're already in, it looks more intense competitively because the stakes are higher and the cutoff numbers are different. Just wondering what it feels like from the inside.

SAHITH THEEGALA: I would agree with that. It felt really intense at the end of the season with it being 70 instead of 125.

I think it's easy to lose sight of how good guys out here actually are, how good an average TOUR guy actually is. You have a good season and you find yourself in the mid-60s, mid-70s going to the last few events, it's like wait, I've got to have a couple great weeks just to make the Playoffs.

It definitely feels a little heightened sense of intensity, and even last week, those guys on the bubble, 70 to 50, they know how important it is getting to those Signature Events. Yeah, those guys that just missed out I'm sure are really, really bummed and the guys that snuck in are really pumped.

It's definitely a little bit different than last year. Last year it felt -- because there are so many people getting cut off each week, guys that were 123rd going to the top 70, it was like, I can't really make it. But it feels completely different this year.

#### Q. With that in mind, when the margins are so small, how do you measure growth or improvement in your game?

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SAHITH THEEGALA: Yeah, it's interesting because all I've really tried to do the last two and a half -- since I've turned pro is just to get a little bit better. I haven't been very results oriented, and I feel like I am. It's tough to gauge exactly by comparing. I think you can only go off what your past self is and compare it to what your present self is because I feel like the game of golf, guys are playing as good as they've ever played, and the game is just going to continue to get better and better.

I'm trying to avoid a little bit comparing because sometimes I look at some of these guys, top 10 guys in the world, and I got to play with more of them this year, and I'm like, man, I've got a ways to go, which in a way is a really good feeling. I feel like there's a lot of progress to be made still.

**Q. When you compare your game, how do you think you're a better player now than this time last year when you're kind of in a similar spot?**

SAHITH THEEGALA: Yeah, I think physically I'm in a lot better shape. I think every year out here is a learning experience, and I have a lot more energy this year coming into the Playoffs. Last year I was really, really gassed, and I'm a little bit stronger, and mentally I feel like I'm just learning little, little things, whether it's intangibles -- definitely a lot of intangibles.

But yeah, I think all you can do is kind of grow in that regard and practice whatever is best for you and hope you get the most out of it. You could be practicing the hardest you've ever practiced, and the scores could be getting worse, but just to know that you are making progress and you're going towards the right direction, kind of use the Kobe/Max Homa thing where when you're chiseling at a rock and you hit it 100 times but it's the 101st time that it breaks, but it's the 100 hits before.

That's been something I've kept in my mind, too, because I feel like I got better, but I had a little bit of a tough stretch in the middle of the season here, and just kind of reminded myself of that.

**Q. You called it one of your best ball-striking rounds. I assume that includes the second shot on 14?**

SAHITH THEEGALA: Yes, yes. I really hit it well today. I hit a couple iron shots out here where maybe just because of the course and knowing you can't short-side where I thought I hit a good shot and it's 40 feet.

But yeah, it was relatively stress-free. I hit a ton of fairways, which again is the most important thing for me. Probably hit nine or ten fairways, which is huge. Yeah, just kind of hit it in spots where I'm supposed to, except 6, I hit

it into the people right of the green.

But I forgot about that shot.

But no, it was a lot of good stuff out there.

**Q. Do you feel like you're part of the captain's pick conversation?**

SAHITH THEEGALA: Honestly, I don't even want to speak for that, but I just feel like I was at some point for sure, and I haven't played well the last, I don't know, three, four months call it.

The team is going to be so, so good, and it's going to be tough to pick. But I have full faith in Captain Zach that he's going to make the right picks and get the right guys going, but I think I'm quite a bit on the outside looking in. Maybe I can do something really cool the next couple weeks to put my name back in the hat there, but I really haven't been thinking much about that.

**Q. Just noticed you have a lot of family here following you around. Can you just tell us who's all here for you and how special it is to have them all supporting you?**

SAHITH THEEGALA: Yeah, I haven't even really looked, but it's just my parents, one of my cousins and my brother right now and a couple family friends. One of my mom's best friends lives in Chicago, so she'll be down. One of my girlfriend's best friends lives here; one of my best friends live here, so they'll all be here the next few days, which is going to be a lot of fun.

But yeah, they haven't been out in full forces in a while, so it'll be a lot of fun this week to have them all out.

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